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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/540,591	03/31/2000	Serge Fourcand	1285-0005	1562

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ALCATEL USA
INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY DEPARTMENT
3400 W. PLANO PARKWAY, MS LEGL2
PLANO, TX 75075

EXAMINER

HSU, ALPUS

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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2665

DATE MAILED: 03/16/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/540,591

Applicant(s)

FOURCAND ET AL.

Examiner

Alpus H. Hsu

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 19 January 2004.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 6-24 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 6-24 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

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1. Applicant's election without traverse of Group II, claims 6-24 in Paper No. 6 is acknowledged.
2. In the specification, pages 1, 2, 37, 40 and 45, the applicant is requested to provide the information regarding the serial no., title, inventor, filing date and update the status from time to time for the listed related co-pending application.
3. Applicant is reminded of the proper language and format for an abstract of the disclosure.

The abstract should be in narrative form and generally limited to a single paragraph on a separate sheet within the range of **50 to 150 words**. It is important that the abstract not exceed 150 words in length since the space provided for the abstract on the computer tape used by the printer is limited. The form and legal phraseology often used in patent claims, such as "means" and "said," should be avoided. The abstract should describe the disclosure sufficiently to assist readers in deciding whether there is a need for consulting the full patent text for details.

The language should be clear and concise and should not repeat information given in the title. It should avoid using phrases which can be implied, such as, "The disclosure concerns," "The disclosure defined by this invention," "The disclosure describes," etc.

4. The lengthy specification has not been checked to the extent necessary to determine the presence of all possible minor errors. Applicant's cooperation is requested in correcting any errors of which applicant may become aware in the specification.
5. Claims 6-24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

In claim 6, line 14, "said line interface card" should be changed to -- each of said at least one line interface card -- to avoid the ambiguity regarding antecedent basis.

In claim 19, lines 6-7, "said framed serial bitstream" should be changed to -- said framed serial status bitstream -- for consistency in claim language.

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In claim 22, lines 6-7, "a plurality of line interface cards" should be changed to -- each of a plurality of line interface cards -- to avoid the ambiguity regarding antecedent basis.

6. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless --

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

7. Claim 22 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by RAJI et al. in U.S. Patent No. 5,812,882.

Regarding claim 22, by broadly interpreting the modular digital dictation system (10) as the claimed bus control module, the digitized dictation signals as the claimed framed control signal, the signal processing card (90) as the claimed framed control signal decoding means, and the timing card (110) as the claimed clock signal distributing means, RAJI et al. discloses a bus control module in a multi-stage distribution system, providing means for decoding a frame control signal (col. 10, lines 23-31) and means for distributing a copy of an incoming system clock signal each of a plurality of line interface cards disposed on a bus segment (col. 16, lines 25-42) as in claim 22.

8. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

9. This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various

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claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

10. Claim 24 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over RAJI et al. in U.S. Patent No. 5,812,882 in view of VIRDEE et al. in U.S. Patent No. 6,198,753.

RAJI et al. fails to disclose a means for selecting a reference clock from a plurality of reference clocks provided by the line interface cards. But RAJI et al. does provide the teaching of timing control for the system utilizing a timing card. And the use of reference clock selected from a plurality of reference clocks provided by the line interface cards is well known in the art and commonly applied in communications field for data synchronization purpose. VIRDEE et al., for example, from the similar field of endeavor, provides the teaching of selection of a reference clock from a plurality of reference clocks provided by the line interface cards (col. 5, lines 31-64), which can be easily adopted by one of ordinary skill in the art to modify the timing card into reference clock selector in the system of RAJI et al. to achieve the data synchronization among line interface cards to further improve the system efficiency.

11. Claims 6-21 would be allowable if rewritten or amended to overcome the rejection(s) under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, set forth in this Office action.

12. Claim 23 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejection(s) under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, set forth in this Office action and to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

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13. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

The subject matter of the claims is allowable over the prior art of record because all prior arts fail to teach or suggest a specific bus control module in a multi-stage distribution system, comprises a decoding circuitry to encode a framed control signal and a status generator for receiving status signals from a plurality of line interface cards and encoding the status signals in a predetermined frame of a frame serial status bitstream based on control data obtained from the framed control signal.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

14. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Toth, Cummings et al. and Blackburn et al. are cited to show the feature of bus control module which controls the data communication among the line interface units in communication network similar to the claimed invention.

Aro et al. is cited to show the feature of bus switch control circuit for interfacing processor to line interface circuit utilizing phase lock loop similar to the claimed invention.

15. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Alpus H. Hsu whose telephone number is (703)305-4377. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F (5:30-3:00) First Friday Off.

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If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Huy D. Vu can be reached on (703)308-6602. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

AHH



Alpus H. Hsu
Primary Examiner
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